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George Overbury "Pop" Hart, *The Merry Go Round*. Watercolor, 1927. Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. From the Summer Exhibition, on view until September 1.

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A Gift to the Museum

The Museum announces the acceptance of a gift on May 22nd from Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., of a large group of modern paintings, watercolors and drawings, which is the major part of her collection of modern works of art. The gift to the Museum comprises 181 objects, the work of 71 American and foreign artists.

Among the artists represented in the gift are: George Bellows, Peter Blume, Emile Branchard, Alexander Brook, Charles Burchfield, Glenn Coleman, Stuart Davis, Charles Demuth, Preston Dickinson, Guy Pène du Bois, Louis Eilshemius, George Overbury "Pop" Hart, Hilaire Hiler, Edward Hopper, John Kane, Bernard Karfiol, Benjamin Kopman, Walt Kuhn, Yasuo Kuniyoshi, John Marin, Alfred Maurer, Georgia O'Keeffe, Jules Pascin, Maurice Prendergast, Ben Shahn, Charles Sheeler, Maurice Sterne, A. Walkowitz, Max Weber, Marguerite Zorach, William Zorach; Tom Nash, P. Wilson Steer; Pierre Bonnard, Marc Chagall, André Derain, Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, Juan Gris, Max Jacob, Albert Marquet, Henri-Matisse, Jacques Mauny, Amedeo Modigliani, Pablo Picasso, Odilon Redon, Georges Rouault, Pierre Roy, Paul Signac; Max Beckmann, Otto Dix, Paul Klee; Per Krohg; Wassily Kandinsky.

In a release to the press on May 23rd Mr. A. Conger Goodyear, President of the Museum, made the following comment on the character of Mrs. Rockefeller's collection and the implications to be drawn from her gift: "Next to the bequest of Miss Lillie P. Bliss, Mrs. Rockefeller's gift is the most important one that the Museum has received.

"In two respects it is particularly important to the Museum. It is made up entirely of the work of artists still living or who have died within the last few years. Secondly, for the most part the collection is the work of American artists and it shows to particular advantage their fine accomplishment in watercolors.

"The Museum of Modern Art as yet has no funds available for the purchase of works for its Permanent Collection. For the building up of that Collection we must rely entirely on gifts and bequests. That the Museum is making steady progress in acquiring an important collection of modern art is evidence of the growing recognition of the importance of such a collection to the general public."

The paintings, watercolors and drawings in Mrs. Rockefeller's gift will not all be shown immediately but will form a cumulative series of exhibitions to run throughout the summer. The first of this series, together with a private collection of 20th century painting of the School of Paris, selections from the Permanent Collection, and the exhibition of European Commercial Printing of Today, opened the Summer Exhibition on June 5th.



Charles Demuth, *Acrobats*. Watercolor, 1919. Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. From the Summer Exhibition, on view until September 1.

Two Reviews of *After Picasso**

I have had the advantage of reading Mr. Soby's book in manuscript. Because of this unusual familiarity with the work, perhaps, Mr. Soby's contention that there is a contemporary wave in painting later than the wave of which Picasso was the crest is to me a highly tenable one. What since Impressionism was currently meant by "modern art" is no longer precisely contemporary. Other groups of painters, notably the Communist group in this country, or the consciously self-Americanized one, might illustrate the same thing. Their programmes are more precise and their esthetic propaganda, in this country at least, more vigorous than the two groups of "Neo-Romantics" and Surrealists with which Mr. Soby deals. But their painting as yet has been of little intrinsic excellence. If Picasso, and not others more consciously theoretical, be the key figure of the preceding generation, then the young painters in Paris have

**After Picasso*, by James Thrall Soby. Hartford, Edwin Valentine Mitchell, 1935. 114 pages, 60 plates. \$3.00.

the greatest chance of inheriting his mantle. Their reaction to the preceding esthetic is the more intelligent and the more subtle since it partakes also of that continuity which is characteristic of Parisian culture. But above all the quality of their production is highest.

New painters appeared in groups long before the twentieth century. At their appearance, the group was often more visible than the individual painters. In the course of time new perspectives and later developments have usually broken up the group conception to such an extent that later critics deny often enough that the groups ever had real existence. In history painters rather than movements are eventually canonized. Yet Mr. Soby wisely does not attempt more than a suggestion of which individuals will in the end prove the strongest in his two groups of "Neo-Romantics" and Surrealists. He also makes very clear the accidental quality of their association and their esthetic ancestry.

All this he does with a completeness and a care for cross connections not to be found elsewhere. This is not a review as much as a recommendation. Others must offer such corrections of detailed mistakes as are inevitable in a work largely dependent on oral sources. Others must attack the major premise that the art of the second generation of the twentieth century differs already quite observably from that of the first. But it should be said that Mr. Soby's presentation achieves a standard of intelligibility and clarity of statement rare in critical writing on twentieth century art.

This is significant: the painting of the "Neo-Romantics" and the Surrealists primarily differs from that of the Abstract generation in that it is a recognizable depiction of persons, objects and scenery and of the painter's sentiments about them. To appreciate abstract art demanded more intellectual effort than any previous art and rewarded in part by an esoteric sense of superiority in the observer. The art of the mid-twentieth century offers no such barrier, for it is not primarily a technical exercise. Hence a critic like Mr. Soby can use the full resources of natural intelligence in presenting contemporary painting rather than a hermetic and specialized sensibility and erudition. Mr. Soby, as a member of the generation about which he writes, can also avail himself of a spontaneous sympathy with the emotional content of the pictures of Bérard, Berman, and Dali. Therefore his intellectual clarity is infused with a warmth of enthusiasm which in no way confuses his critical discrimination.

HENRY-RUSSELL HITCHCOCK, JR.

In discussing work of contemporary artists it is difficult to avoid the distortions of perspective imposed by our personal enthusiasms. But an enthusiastic introduction by an admirer has a value of its own. It often brings to light many facets of a painter's approach and personal outlook that a strictly critical consideration might not be led to record. From his book *After Picasso* James Thrall Soby's admiration for a group of young Parisian painters that he describes as the "Neo-Romantics" is evident. The work of Bérard,

Berman, Tchelitchev, Tonny and Leonide could scarcely receive a more generous appreciation than he accords it. As an introduction to the work of this group Mr. Soby's book is both informative and interesting. Before its appearance no formal commentary on these painters existed in English. Here the need is adequately filled.

From the title *After Picasso* one might be led to believe that Mr. Soby's book is a discussion of all the more important trends of recent avant garde painting. But in the foreword Mr. Soby plainly states that the purpose of his book is to document briefly several aspects of a reaction against "painting as architecture" "as it has manifested itself in the work of two groups of artists, the Neo-Romantics and the Surrealists." Within these limits Mr. Soby's book is simply and unpretentiously written. It is especially successful in its brief notices on the artists considered and, in several instances, in its detailed descriptions of their techniques.

But, while Mr. Soby's enthusiasm for the work of a few younger artists is the basis of the interesting features of his book, it is also the source of its weaknesses. For, in the end, we find *After Picasso* to be a consideration of an extremely narrow field of contemporary painting and one which emphasizes the extra-plastic features of plastic art at the expense of fundamental plastic qualities.

From Mr. Soby's enthusiasms it is evident that his personal interest in painting is primarily rooted in the extra-plastic features of pictures. Aside from the character of the work of the two groups immediately under discussion, this fact is attested by his interest in Picasso's "blue period" productions and his general eagerness for psychological interpretations. As an example of the latter we see him, on page 97, reading symbols of "paranoiac cruelty" into the forms of the large 1927 Picasso "Seated Woman" which was formerly in the Wiborg Collection in New York. And to justify his interest in such features we find him leaning to a Tolstoian esthetic, based, in the case of Surrealism, on Freudian grounds. On page 6 we read: "the painting of the Neo-Romantics and the Surrealists is more readily communicable than the painting of the Cubists." Again on page 7 "Whereas Cubism is extremely beautiful to an initiated few, Surrealism does seem to be able to communicate at least a part of its message to people without special knowledge of art. While few people have penetrated the professional secrecy of Cubism, many are at least strangely excited by Dali's limp watches."

For Mr. Soby "the fact that Dali has been signed to do Surrealist drawings for the Hearst papers" (page 7) is an important evidence of the wide comprehensibility of his type of Surrealism. On the same basis, this fact should offer a fair indication of the character of "emotional" and "paranoiac" features stressed at the expense of a primarily plastic approach in these so-called "reactions against the hypothesis of 'painting as architecture.'" JAMES JOHNSON SWEENEY.

New Circulating Exhibitions

1. **Painting by Twelve Americans.**
12 important oil paintings, recent gifts of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., to the Museum's Permanent Collection by Blume, Brook, Coleman, Dickinson, du Bois, Kane, Karfiol, Kopman, Kuhn, Prendergast, Sheeler, Weber.
2. **Watercolors by Six Americans.**
25 watercolors, also recent gifts of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., to the Museum's Permanent Collection by Burchfield, Demuth, Dickinson, Hart, Hopper and Prendergast.
3. **European Commercial Printing of Today.**
37 placards contain material from 10 European countries.
4. **Henry Hobson Richardson.**
Original drawings, enlarged photographs of buildings, plans and explanatory wall placards.
5. **Photographic Exhibition of African Negro Art.**
75 enlarged photographs reproduce the principal objects shown in the recent Exhibition of African Negro Art.

Next Season's Exhibitions

Vincent van Gogh.

Abstract Art: painting, sculpture, architecture, typography and films.

The work of Henry Hobson Richardson, the pioneer of modern American architecture.

Modern Painters as Illustrators.

Fernand Léger.

The recent work of Le Corbusier: enlarged photographs, plans and models.

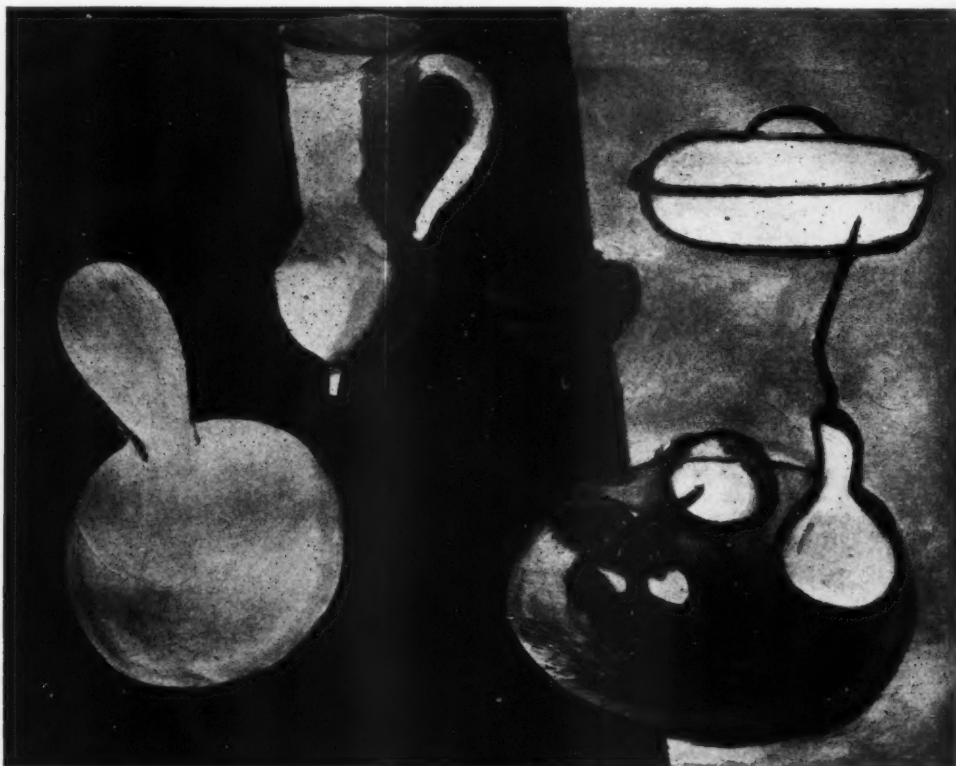
Posters by Cassandre and McKnight-Kauffer.

California architects.

Bookbindings by Ignatz Wiemeler.

Election of Trustee

The President and Trustees announce the election to the Board of Trustees of Mrs. Stanley R. Resor of New York. The election took place at the 50th meeting held on May 9th, 1935.



Henri-Matisse, *The Courds*. Oil, 1916. Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. From the Summer Exhibition, on view until September 1.

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